



# 2017 Mental Health Awareness Month Toolkit

Encouraging our community to join  
the conversation

**BHD** | MILWAUKEE COUNTY  
Behavioral  
Health  
Division

## Dear Friends,

This month, Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele declared [May Mental Health Awareness Month](#). This May, the Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division (BHD) is launching a month-long campaign designed to foster conversations about mental health care, reducing stigma and breaking down barriers for individuals to seek support. Everyone can suffer from mental illness and we know that engaging people in conversations about behavioral health and in their active recovery is extremely important.

We look forward to working with you - our city health departments, nonprofit organizations, coalitions, schools, providers and other partners - to share facts and resources while encouraging our community to start conversations in-person at a variety of events and online using the hashtag [#myMHconvo](#). BHD will share stories about dedicated mental health professionals, children's mental health resources and information on prevention activities, and will share additional resources on social media.

We also invite you to join us for a special community conversation focused on mental health services in Milwaukee County facilitated by the Zeidler Center. This conversation will take place on May 4 at Hillside Terrace Resource Center between 5:45 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

As the connection point to information, resources and hundreds of behavioral care providers throughout Milwaukee County, our team at BHD developed this Mental Health Awareness Month toolkit, using resources from various sources including the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Mental Health America and Mental Health.gov. These resources make it even easier to get people in our community talking about mental health. You're welcome to add your organization's logo and contact information to any of the materials so people can get in touch with you and start talking about mental health.

Sincerely,

[Mike Lappen](#)  
Administrator  
Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division



## THE 2017 MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH TOOLKIT

This year we've created a campaign toolkit for Mental Health Awareness Month to make it even easier to get people talking about mental health.

### By using the toolkit, you will help members of our community:

- Start talking about mental health
- Understand that mental illness can affect anyone at any stage of life
- Become familiar with the early warning signs of mental illness
- Know who to contact to get help today
- The toolkit includes:

#### Media Materials

- Key messages and statistics
- Template press release

#### Print Materials

- Frequently asked questions about mental health (FAQ)
- Mental Health Myths and Facts
- Sample Prevention Week Proclamation
- Mental Health Awareness Month flyers
  - General Mental Health Awareness Month 2017
  - Children's Mental Health
  - Prevention Week

#### Social Media and Web Components

- Sample Facebook and Twitter Posts
- Facebook Profile and Cover Images
- Twitter Profile and Header Images

### Let us know what you've got planned!

Tell us about your events so we can post them on our website, share on social media pages, inform our partners and help you get the word out. **Email [Katy.Glodosky@milwaukeecountywi.gov](mailto:Katy.Glodosky@milwaukeecountywi.gov)** with the following information:

*Name of Event*

*Date*

*Location*

*Brief Description*

*Link to more information/Registration*

*Contact Person*

## KEY MESSAGES AND STATISTICS

Behavioral health disorders are common in the United States and worldwide.

### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

One in five American adults experienced a mental health issue

One in 10 young people experienced a period of major depression

One in 25 Americans live with a serious mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or major depression

Depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide and is a major contributor to the global burden of disease

Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States. It accounts for the loss of more than 41,000 American lives each year; more than double the number of lives lost to homicide

Globally, more than 800,000 people die due to suicide every year, and suicide is the second leading cause of death in 15-29-year-olds. There are indications that for each adult who has died of suicide, there may have been more than 20 others attempting suicide (WHO)

Mental illness knows no bounds. Everyone can suffer at any stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

An estimated 18.5% of American adults and 13% of children (ages 8 to 15) suffer from a mental illness in a given year (NAMI)

Around 20% of the world's children and adolescents have mental disorders

About half of mental disorders begin before the age of 14

Similar types of disorders are being reported across cultures. Neuropsychiatric disorders are among the leading causes of worldwide disability in young people. Yet, regions of the world with the highest percentage of population under the age of 19 have the poorest level of mental health resources. Most low- and middle-income countries have only one child psychiatrist for every 1 to 4 million people (WHO)



Conversations about mental health can break down stigma. You don't have to be an expert to talk and to listen, and often it's the little things that make a big difference.

### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

Misunderstanding and stigma surrounding mental illness are widespread. Despite the existence of effective treatments for mental disorders, there is a belief that they are untreatable or that people with mental disorders are difficult, not intelligent or incapable of making decisions. This stigma can lead to abuse, rejection and isolation, and exclude people from health care or support. Within the health system, people are too often treated in institutions which resemble human warehouses rather than places of healing (WHO).

**“The journey to recovery starts with getting help. This is the first step.”**

Recovery is possible. People with a mental illness can get better and many recover completely.

### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

Studies show that people with a mental illness can get better and many recover completely. Recovery refers to the process in which people are able to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities. There are more treatments, services, and community support systems than ever before, and they work. Treatment and recovery are ongoing processes that happen over time. The first step is getting help (NAMI).

The Milwaukee County Behavioral Health Division is a community connector. We bring people with mental illness together with resources and providers who can help.

### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

Milwaukee County's Behavioral Health Division (BHD) is the first stop for information and help with behavioral health. BHD provides care and services to everyone in need, no matter their severity of need or ability to pay.

### CALL US ANYTIME

24/7 Crisis Line: 414-257-7222  
Community Services/BHD  
Access Clinic: (414) 257-7665

Visit our website:  
[county.milwaukee.gov/BHD](http://county.milwaukee.gov/BHD)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### *about mental health*

\*Source: [www.mentalhealth.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.gov)

#### What is Mental Health Awareness Month?

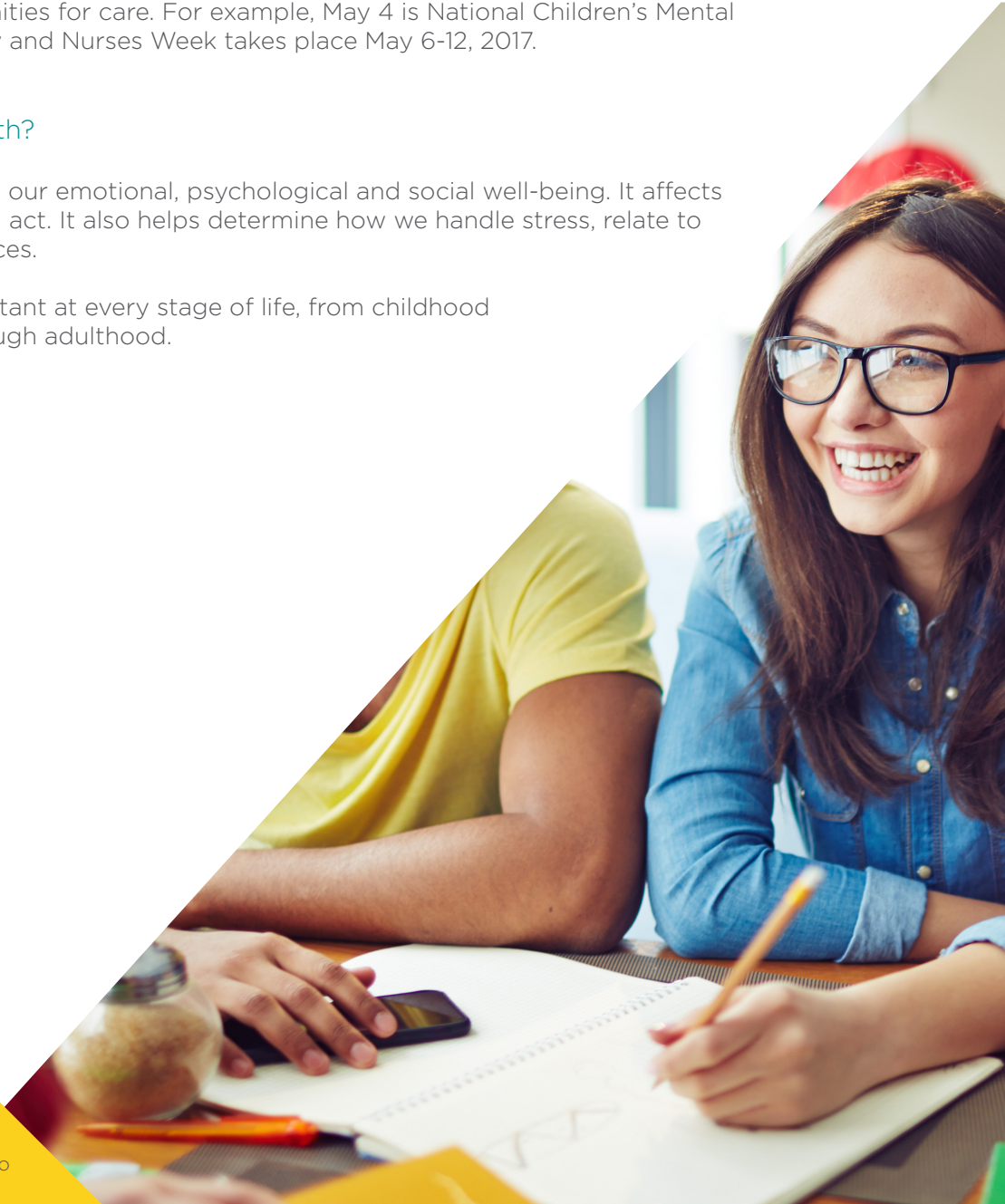
National Mental Health Awareness Month was initiated in 1940, originally as a “mental health week,” to raise awareness about mental illness. In the 1960s the campaign was expanded to fill an entire month, with May as the designated month.

Throughout the month, diverse groups all over the United States implement campaigns and activities to draw attention to a variety of mental health issues, services and opportunities for care. For example, May 4 is National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day and Nurses Week takes place May 6-12, 2017.

#### What is mental health?

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices.

Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.



## What causes mental illness?

Many factors contribute to mental illness including:

- Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse
- Family history of mental illness

## Can people with mental illness recover?

People with mental illness can get better and many recover completely. The journey to recovery is different for everyone, but the first step is to get help. If you or someone you know has a mental health problem, there are ways to get help.

## Are there any warning signs of mental illness?

Experiencing one or more of the following feelings or behaviors can be an early warning sign:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy
- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your kids or getting to work or school

## What can people do to maintain positive mental health?

- Get professional help if you need it
- Connect with others
- Stay positive
- Exercise and stay physically active
- Help others
- Get enough sleep
- Develop coping skills

## What are the most common mental health disorders?

According to the U.S. Department for Health and Human Services, Americans most commonly suffer from the following mental health disorders.

### *Anxiety Disorders*

People with anxiety disorders respond to certain objects or situations with fear and dread. Anxiety disorders can include obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorders and phobias.

### *Behavioral Disorders*

Behavioral disorders involve a pattern of disruptive behaviors in children that last for at least six months and cause problems in school, at home and in social situations. Examples of behavioral disorders include Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), Conduct Disorder and Oppositional-Defiant Disorder (ODD).

### *Eating Disorders*

Eating disorders involve extreme emotions, attitudes and behaviors involving weight and food. Eating disorders can include anorexia, bulimia and binge eating.

### *Mood Disorders*

Mood disorders involve persistent feelings of sadness or periods of feeling overly happy, or fluctuating between extreme happiness and extreme sadness. Mood disorders can include depression, bipolar disorder, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and self-harm.

### *Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)*

People with OCD have repeated, upsetting thoughts called obsessions. They do the same thing over and over again to try to make the thoughts go away. Those repeated actions are called compulsions.

### *Personality Disorders*

People with personality disorders have extreme and inflexible personality traits that are distressing to the person and may cause problems in work, school or social relationships. Personality disorders can include antisocial personality disorder and borderline personality disorder.



## Common mental health disorders cont.

### *Psychotic Disorders*

People with psychotic disorders experience a range of symptoms, including hallucinations and delusions. An example of a psychotic disorder is schizophrenia.

### *Suicidal Behavior*

Suicide causes immeasurable pain, suffering and loss to individuals, families and communities nationwide.

### *Trauma and Stress Related Disorders*

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can occur after living through or seeing a traumatic event, such as war, a hurricane, rape, physical abuse or a bad accident. PTSD makes you feel stressed and afraid after the danger is over.

### *Addiction and Substance Abuse*

Addiction is a disease, much like diabetes or high blood pressure, and it should be treated as such. Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) programs include detox centers, day treatment, inpatient/outpatient facilities, residential programs and intervention/prevention efforts to assist an individual through every stage of their recovery journey.

## Who can I contact in Milwaukee County for help?

Milwaukee County's Behavioral Health Division (BHD) is the first stop for information and help on behavioral health. BHD provides care and services to everyone in need, no matter their severity of need or ability to pay.

24/7 Crisis Line: 414-257-7222

Community Services/BHD Access Clinic: (414) 257-7665

Visit our website: [county.milwaukee.gov/BHD](http://county.milwaukee.gov/BHD)



## MENTAL HEALTH MYTHS AND FACTS

*Can you tell the difference between a mental health myth and fact? Learn the truth about the most common mental health myths.*

***Myth:** Children don't experience mental health disorders.*

**Fact:** Even very young children may show early warning signs of mental health concerns. Half of all mental health disorders show first signs before a person turns 14 years old, and three-fourths of mental health disorders begin before age 24.

***Myth:** People with mental health disorders are violent and unpredictable.*

**Fact:** The vast majority of people with mental health disorders are no more likely to be violent than anyone else. Most people with mental illness are not violent and only 3-5% of violent acts can be attributed to individuals living with a serious mental illness. In fact, people with severe mental illnesses are over 10 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population.

***Myth:** People with mental health needs, even those who are managing their mental illness, cannot tolerate the stress of holding down a job.*

**Fact:** People with mental health disorders are just as productive as other employees. Employers who hire people with mental health disorders report good attendance and punctuality as well as motivation, good work and job tenure on par with or greater than other employees.



*Myth: Personality weakness or character flaws cause mental health disorders.*

**Fact:** Mental health disorders have nothing to do with being lazy or weak, and many people need help to get better.

*Myth: There is no hope for people with mental health disorders.*

**Fact:** Studies show that people with mental health disorders get better and many recover completely. Recovery refers to the process in which people are able to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities. There are more treatments, services and community support systems than ever before, and they work.

*Myth: Therapy and self-help are a waste of time. Why bother when you can just take a pill?*

**Fact:** Treatment for mental health disorders varies depending on the individual and could include medication, therapy or both. Many individuals work with a support system during the healing and recovery process.

*Myth: I can't do anything for a person with a mental health disorder.*

**Fact:** Friends and loved ones can make a big difference. Only 44% of adults with diagnosable mental health disorders and less than 20% of children and adolescents receive needed treatment. Friends and family can be important influences to help someone get the treatment and services they need by:

- Reaching out and letting them know you are available to help
- Helping them access mental health services
- Learning and sharing the facts about mental health, especially if you hear something that isn't true
- Treating them with respect, just as you would anyone else
- Refusing to define them by their diagnosis or using labels such as "crazy"

*Myth: Prevention doesn't work. It is impossible to prevent mental illnesses.*

**Fact:** Prevention of mental, emotional and behavioral disorders focuses on addressing known risk factors, such as exposure to trauma, that can affect the chances that children, youth and young adults will develop mental health problems.

## SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

**Contact: [NAME, PHONE, EMAIL]**

(NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION) **kicks off Mental Health Awareness Month, encourages conversations about mental illness**

(NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION to (LIST ACTIVITY)), **and use social media to spark conversations**

**Milwaukee, WI** (DATE) — May is Mental Health Awareness Month. (NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION) is supporting our community throughout the month to start conversations about mental health in order to raise awareness about mental health conditions, break-down stigma about mental health illness, and encourage people in our community, who are suffering from a mental health illness, to seek support.

“Approximately 180,000 people in Milwaukee County struggle with a mental illness. In the United States one in five adults suffer from a mental illness and one in ten youth experience depression,” said (NAME, TITLE, AFFILIATION OF PERSON FROM YOUR ORGANIZATION). ”

Everyone can suffer from a mental health illness at any stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Getting help quickly is one of the best ways to prevent mental health illness. Getting help also starts people along the path towards recovery. But many people in our community don’t know where to go for support and they’re often afraid to talk about their problems.

This May, (NAME OF OUR ORGANIZATION) will work alongside Milwaukee County’s Behavioral Health Division, city health departments, non-profit organizations, coalitions, schools and other partners and share facts and resources to engage our community to start conversations in person at a variety of events and online using the hashtag #myMHconvo. (INCLUDE A SENTENCE ABOUT WHAT YOUR ORGANIZATION PLANS TO DO DURING MENTAL HEALTH MONTH) Posting with our hashtag is a way to speak up, to start a conversation, to educate without judgment, and to share your point of view or story with people who may be suffering—and help others figure out if they are showing signs of a mental illness.

“We need to encourage people to speak up and seek support. Our community has many resources available to people suffering from mental illness and we’d like everyone to know that talking about their condition is an important step in recovery,” said [NAME] [TITLE] of [AFFILIATE]. “

(BOILERPLATE WITH INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR ORGANIZATION)

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## SAMPLE PREVENTION WEEK PROCLAMATION

*Milwaukee County Executive Chris Abele declared May Mental Health Awareness Month. Encourage your local public officials to go on the record in support of mental health. Below, please find a sample proclamation that designates the week of 14 - 20 May as Prevention Week. An official signing of a proclamation is a perfect occasion for a news event, photo opportunity or other activity. This proclamation has been developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSA). Feel free to use and adapt it.*

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Substance use and mental health problems affect all communities nationwide. According to the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, an estimated 27.1 million Americans are current illicit drug users. Nearly 20.3 percent or 7.7 million young people report drinking alcohol in the past month, and one in five Americans ages 12 or older smokes cigarettes.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, in 2015, 12.5 million Americans misused pain relievers, and for more than half of them, the last pain reliever they misused came from a friend or relative.<sup>3</sup>

With commitment and support, these and other behavioral health issues can be prevented. The focus of National Prevention Week is to prevent substance use and promote mental health. This year's National Prevention Week theme, "Making Each Day Count," recognizes the power each person has to influence the health and well-being of others by making prevention choices every day—whether it's by supporting someone who's going through a difficult time, by participating in activities that strengthen the community, or by instilling healthy habits in children from an early age.

Taking part in prevention - related activities and conversations help raise awareness of behavioral health issues and changes lives. That's a message we need to spread far and wide. An estimated 12.3 million people in America are classified with substance dependence or use of illicit drugs or alcohol, and about 44 million adults have a mental illness.<sup>4,5</sup> The impact of substance use and mental illness is apparent in our local community: An estimated [XX THOUSAND/ MILLION] people in [CITY OR STATE] are affected by these conditions. We have the power to change these numbers, and more importantly, change lives.

Through National Prevention Week, people become more aware and able to recognize the signs of mental health problems and substance use. Equally important, community members of all walks of life learn what they can do to make each day count by helping to prevent these problems. Whether it's by being a shoulder for someone to lean on, leading someone to get help for a behavioral health issue before it worsens, or setting an example by staying substance-free, we all have a role to play in keeping the people around us—and ourselves—healthy and safe.

We, and others across the United States, need to recognize the seriousness of behavioral health issues in our communities, the power of prevention, and the tireless efforts of those working to make a difference. The small, daily actions done by individuals, combined with the actions of families, communities, and coalitions, come together to make up the larger, bold movement of prevention. For the above reasons, I am asking the citizens of [CITY OR STATE] to join me in observing National Prevention Week 2017 this May.

I, [NAME AND TITLE OF ELECTED OFFICIAL], do hereby proclaim May 14-20, 2017, as PREVENTION WEEK in [CITY/COMMUNITY] and call upon our community to observe this week with compelling programs and events that support this year's theme, "Making Each Day Count."

Date

Signature

## MENTAL HEALTH INFOGRAPHICS

We encourage you to print, download and share the following helpful infographics containing great information about mental health, provided by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

- Mental health facts
- Multicultural mental health facts
- Children and teens
- Getting the right start, students
- Taking charge of your mental health
- Want to know how to help a friend

Find graphics from NAMI here: <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Fact-Sheet-Library>

## MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH FLYERS

Download ([milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo](http://milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo)), print and share the flyers to help spread awareness of mental health topics with your community.



- My mental health conversation. Mental Health Awareness Month 2017.
- Anyone can suffer from mental health disorders. Children and behavioral health.
- Join the conversation. Sample Event Announcement.

## SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

### TWITTER

Below are a series of tweets to get you started with your Twitter outreach for Mental Health Awareness Month.

#### GENERAL TWEETS:

*May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Share the #MHM2017 toolkit to start a MH convo today. [Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo](http://Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo) #myMHconvo*

*How much do you know about mental illness? Download the #MHM2017 toolkit to find out. [Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo](http://Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo) #myMHconvo*

#### TWEETS FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY, MAY 4:

*How can the MKE County BHD help people with mental illness? Let us know on May 4 @ZeidlerCenter [Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo](http://Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo) #myMHconvo*

*Join the discussion about child mental health in MKE on May 4 at 5:30pm @ZeidlerCenter. [Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo](http://Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo) #myMHconvo #MHM2017*

#### TWEETS FOR NURSES WEEK, MAY 6 - 12:

*#NursesWeek is May 6-12. A great time to say thanks to nurses who help us stay healthy! #myMHconvo*

#### TWEETS FOR PREVENTION WEEK, MAY 14 - 20

*May 14 - 20 is prevention week. Get the #MHM2017 toolkit to find how you can prevent mental illness. [Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo](http://Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo) #myMHconvo*

*Preventing mental illness starts with a conversation. Find out more in our #MHM2017 toolkit [Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo](http://Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo) #myMHconvo*



## SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

### FACEBOOK

Below are a series of sample Facebook posts to start a conversation on Mental Health Awareness Month.

*May is Mental Health Awareness Month.*

*Join @MilwaukeeCountyDepartmentOfHealthHumanServices to start the conversation about mental health. Download the toolkit, featuring myths and facts about mental health and more from Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo #myMHconvo*

*Did you know that 18.5% of American adults and 13% of children (ages 8 to 15) suffer from a mental illness? Download the #MHM2017 #myMHconvo toolkit and learn more about mental illness and what you can do to prevent mental illness at Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo*

*May 4 is Child Mental Health Day. One in 10 youth in America have experienced major depression. Many people who suffer from mental health conditions showed signs before they were 24 years old. Find out more about the warning signs. Download the #MHM2017 #myMHconvo toolkit Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo*

*We need to speak up early and educate people about mental health —and do so in a compassionate, judgement-free way. Download the #MHM2017 #myMHconvo toolkit Milwaukee.gov/myMHconvo*

### OTHER IDEAS

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- Post tips from this toolkit.
- Share graphics and flyers from this toolkit.
- Use the hashtags: #MHM2017, #MyMHconvo
- Tag @MkeCoDHHS in posts that you create.
- Follow us on social media and share the additional original content we will be posting for Mental Health Month throughout May, including videos!